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EDITORIAL COMMENT



THE YEAR THAT HAS CLOSED

DURING the year that has just come to an end work has been done for the advancement of the nursing interest of which the profession may well be proud.

State registration, which was so entirely in its infancy at the time of the Buffalo Congress, has since that time, and under the stimulus of that gathering of nurses, become a recognized necessity. One year ago the State Associations of New York and Illinois had not completed their organization, and New Jersey was just beginning to move. To-day Virginia and North Carolina have joined the advance procession, and Massachusetts is beginning to agitate. In Great Britain a national society has been formed with registration as its motive, and before the new year has closed the result of this movement in both countries will be at least nearer a definite settlement, if not positively concluded.

One year ago comparatively few of the leading nurse-schools were concerning themselves with the subject of preliminary training. The Johns Hopkins School alone was trying the experiment after a year or more of careful planning. During the year (July JOURNAL) Miss Nutting has given to the profession a full report of her curriculum and its result, which demonstrated that the methods in use at that school were greatly in advance of any other system in operation.

During the year the need of preliminary instruction has become universally recognized and accepted, and in two cities, at the New York City Training-School and in Rochester, definite experiments are being tried.

PROFESSIONALISM IN THE NEW YEAR

WE feel justified in claiming for the JOURNAL a considerable amount of credit for the progress made upon these lines, it having been largely the medium for the interchange of such ideas.

In the coming year we hope to see develop and grow a broader spirit of professionalism. Dr. Worcester explained in his paper, "Is Nursing Really a Profession?" (in August) the difference between a trade and a profession. In a trade the workman keeps secret any new invention or protects it by a patent that he may reap the benefit for his own personal gain, while the member of a profession, having made a discovery of value either to his fellow-members or to humanity, gives freely of that knowledge to his profession and to the world at large that the benefits may be as far-reaching as possible.

In a trade motives are selfish; in a profession they are educational and altruistic.

With State registration will come the first tangible step towards a genuine professional basis for nurses. Until that time comes we have no recognized place either with the professions, the trades, or the technical schools. With registration a minimum standard of education for the nurse will be fixed by law upon such lines as nurses themselves shall direct.

To keep pace with this advance in professionalism the spirit of reciprocity needs to be cultivated, both between training-schools, individual nurses of different schools, and with the women in other lines of work. There is a tendency

to profit by the experience of others, but to give grudgingly of the result of one's own efforts. Such a spirit is contrary to the professional idea.

Every man or woman whose experience in life has brought him or her into the turmoil of affairs learns quite as much from his or her failures as from successes, and profits equally by the successes or failures of others. In just the measure that we hope to receive, we must give.

Among schools for nurses there should be a freer interchange of the result of experimental methods. Among graduate nurses there should be a complete wiping out of school lines, and that we shall consider the nurses of other schools as members of the great body professional, judging of their worthiness by their character and the quality of their work rather than by their school. School lines must not be permitted to limit our professional boundaries, neither must we stand apart, satisfied to work only with, and for, the women of our chosen profession. We are a part of the great woman's movement of the age in which we live, and women in other lines of work need us, just as much as we need them, to prevent our becoming narrow and one-sided.

THE EDUCATIONAL STATUS

THE present issue of the JOURNAL may quite properly be called a Training-School number, containing, as it does, so many papers that relate to teaching methods.

Miss Richards's bit of pioneer history is wonderfully interesting, and, considered in connection with our present status of nursing education, cannot fail to impress everyone with the remarkable results that have come from the efforts of Florence Nightingale and that first group of English superintendents whom she describes. Thirty-one years ago on the first of last September Miss Richards entered the only training-school in existence in this country. The schools in connection with Bellevue, New Haven, and the Massachusetts General Hospitals were nearly, but not quite, ready to open their doors at this time. In those early days Miss Richards was a very powerful factor in the development of training-schools, and, in addition to her personal work as an organizer, she trained many of the women who went out into new places.

We are told that there are thirty thousand trained nurses in the United States. This is at the rate of more than one thousand graduates a year, and it is only in accord with the history of other professions that in a growth so rapid there should be many imperfections. There are training-schools and nurses in every city of any size in this country, and trained nurses, from being a luxury, have become a necessity to the people in every rank of society.

Having, in a measure, supplied the demand for this kind of service, it is still in accord with the history of other professions that we should now turn our attention to the quality of that service, and the efforts that are being made for such improvement are shown in the papers read at the superintendents' meeting in Detroit which are given in this number.

JOHNS HOPKINS METHOD

As we have already stated, the most advanced work that has been tested by time is being done at the Johns Hopkins. There are a number of points to consider in connection with the methods in use there. Miss Nutting's paper, published in the July JOURNAL, shows that the raw recruit enters first upon a

period of theoretical study, and is not called upon for service in the wards until she has completed that portion of her training that can be taught from books, by laboratory methods, and by demonstration without the aid of the patient. When she enters the wards to be taught practical nursing she understands the theory of bacteriology, of asepsis; she is grounded in the laws of hygiene; she is familiar with the construction of the human body and the function of its organs, and she understands food in its component parts and in its preparation. In other words, she understands the theory of medicine and nursing before she is called upon to perform practical work in the wards.

There is no question but that up to this point the Johns Hopkins method is greatly superior to that of any other school's, but it seems to us to have two weak points. We know that it is possible for a woman to give excellent satisfaction as a student, but fail in the practical part of her work. In nursing, manual dexterity, temperament, and the moral qualities are of equal, if not greater, importance than the intellectual qualities, and in Miss Nutting's plan there would seem to be a great opportunity for failure after completing the preliminary training given at such great expense by the hospital. More than that, the expense of this course is infinitely greater than the majority of our hospitals can undertake. Miss Nutting in her report, given in the present number, has not stated whether or not any of the pupils have failed after entering the wards, nor has she given the per capita cost to the hospital.

THE CENTRAL SCHOOL IDEA

AT about the same time that the Johns Hopkins method was being arranged, Miss Mary E. P. Davis, who had a short time before resigned as the superintendent of the University of Pennsylvania Hospital in Philadelphia, began to agitate in Boston the central-school idea that she has described in the paper given in this issue. The trouble with Miss Davis's plan is that it is a quarter of a century ahead of the times, and coming to it must be a matter of evolution. The trend of the most advanced thought points to the ideas expressed by Miss Davis. Eventually nurses will pay for that portion of their nursing education that can be obtained away from the bedside of the patient, and the hospitals will be relieved of the responsibility and expense of providing such instruction.

Miss Gilmour's suggestion that high-schools and universities should give elective courses to women intending to take up nursing will eventually be realized, but a demand for such instruction must first be created.

Miss Gilmour's plan, as shown in her paper, and that being followed in Rochester (December number) are similar in some features, but in the latter city three schools are combining to send their pupils outside of the hospital for theoretical instruction under a corps of trained teachers whose sole business in life is to teach. The disadvantage in this plan in both places would seem to be that under the stress and strain of hospital work the pupils are in danger of overwork, and the first incentive for a change in teaching methods has been to protect the pupil from overstrain, which has been the crying evil of the old system.

The hopeful sign of the present situation is in the general dissatisfaction with the old system and the amount of experimental work that is being done, all tending towards the betterment of the quality of nursing service upon lines that shall in time be more uniform, both in theory and practice. The course at Waltham can hardly be classed with that of the other schools, for the rea-

son that the hospital facilities are limited, but in the theoretical and domestic departments the work seems to possess many advantages. With the discussions at the Detroit meeting and the letters that are included, the subject of our educational status is brought down to the present day.

HOSPITAL ECONOMICS PAPER

At the request of the committee in charge of the course in Hospital Economics, we have also included a paper prepared by two members of the class of last year on a training-school curriculum. The advantage of such training before entering upon teaching work appeals at once to the women who have gained their knowledge by thrashing it out of hard experience. This course at Teachers' College is another great factor in the movement for the betterment of the quality of service.

SYMPOSIUM ON TYPHOID FEVER

THE first of a series of papers on typhoid fever commences in this issue, and the writer deals with the subject from its general stand-point. It will be followed by a paper on baths in typhoid, hemorrhages, diet, etc., and as each special paper appears we hope our readers will supplement the writers' information by notes from their own practical experience, thus rounding out the subject in its entirety.

NEW YORK STATE MEETING

WE call attention to the announcement on another page of the regular quarterly meeting of the New York State Nurses' Association to be held the third Tuesday in January in New York City. An interesting programme has been arranged.

Every nurse who is a graduate either from a training-school connected with a general hospital or a New York State hospital for the insane should become a member of the State Association, and those intending to join next year, which begins with the annual meeting the third Tuesday in April, should make application before the twentieth of February.

Four points in regard to registration should be borne in mind:

First, that the immediate benefit will be to the public, the patients, and the physicians, the advantage to the nurses being *indirect* and in the future.

Second, that laws in New York are never retroactive; that is, nurses now in active work will not have to pass an examination, but will register their diplomas and continue to work as they always have.

Third, that placing training-schools under the supervision of the Regents *insures* to a woman giving her time to a hospital the amount of nursing education that the State shall decide is necessary for a nurse to have in return for her services.

Fourth, that the movement for registration is a movement of the nurses of the present day to better the conditions of the nurses of the future.

Who can afford not to march with the spirit of the times?

GREETING

To the many friends who never fail to wish the JOURNAL success, we wish a happy new year.